

## When God's name and His kingdom gets real

(Lent 3)

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[Bible passage: Matthew 6:9-10](#)



### 1. His Real Name is HOLY

*It was Sunday afternoon. The family was sitting around the table for dinner after church. Six year-old Bobby was lost in his thoughts as he stired the mashed potatoes on his plate with his fork.*

*Suddenly, he raised his voice and asked his parents: " Why don't we call God by his name?" His parents were puzzled and said: "What do you mean, Bobby?" "I mean, why don't we call God by his name?"*

*His mother said: " I do not understand what do you mean..."*

*So Bobby goes on to explain: " Well, in church we always say: Hallowed be thy name" and then we never call him that..."*

Bobby's question needs to be taken seriously. Why don't we call God "hollowed"? We repeat this phrase casually, without really thinking about the real significance of what we are saying. It is such a simple ...yet profound request.

Jesus teaches that the first priority in praying is to ask that our heavenly Father's name be hallowed.

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."

***This is a petition, a request.*** It is not a declaration . It is a request to God that he would see to it that ***his own name be hallowed.*** We are asking that all of life be filled with God's name. We are asking that all of life be filled with His presence and His power, and to be "set aside."

#### **A. HOLY MEANS "SET ASIDE"**

Holy means that. Holy is something what is used only for specific purpose, not for everyday use.

*I remember, in my growing up years I had cloth and shoes that I was allowed to use only on Sundays when we went to church. That was my Sunday-dress. It was special. It was for the same reason: to have something special for that day when we go to the house of the Lord.*

*Well, sometimes it was not easy. I would had loved to run around during the weekdays in my nice shoes, but usually I got it only when it started to get a bit smaller.*

*Sunday cloth was special. It was special for the same reason: to show in this outwardly appearance that God is holy, God is "set aside."*

The word "hallow" means sanctify. When God sanctifies us, it means that he makes us holy. But when we sanctify God, it means that we treat him as holy.

### ***B. GOD'S CHARACTER IS HOLY:***

The phrase "hallowed be thy name," tells us something about the character of God. In fact, the names of God revealed in the Word of God reveal His character to us. The only way we can know God is through the *many names by which He has revealed Himself to us*. His names tell us Who He is!

There are many names of God given in the Bible.

He is called "Elohim", which means "God."

He is called Jehovah-Elyon, which means "The Lord most high."

He is called Jehovah-M'Kaddesh, which means, "The Lord our sanctifier."

He is called El-Shaddai, which means "The all-sufficient One", or the "Almighty God."

He is called Adonai, which means "Lord."

He is also called "Father," that is a name which blesses my heart!

He is called by many names, but the greatest of all His names is "*Jesus Christ*".

This is the God who took upon Himself human flesh, was born into this world and died on the cross for sinners. His names reveal Who He is and what He does for His people.

When we enter His presence in prayer, we are to take the time to worship, honor and praise Him for Who He is. We are to lift heart, soul and voice to the One Who is God; to the One Who loved us, saved us, keeps us and cares for us. *We are to take the time to reverence Him and honor His hallowed Name.*

### ***C. BLESS GOD'S NAME THROUGH PRAYER, PRAISE***

A little bit of cultural background:

For the Jewish people prayer was more than an occasional activity. Prayer was not a compartmentalized activity—it was ongoing. It encompassed *every area of life and somehow every moment of the day*.

You may remember that Jesus had a regular rhythm of going away to lonely places to pray. But then sometimes just spontaneously He would burst into prayer as if He'd been in dialogue with God all day long, and this little bit that those around Him might have heard was just the overflow.

You get a sense of this when Jesus bursts out saying:

*"I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me. (John 11:42)*

The tip of the iceberg!!

Jewish prayer was like that. It encompassed every area of life.

*Sometimes I think I'm incredibly spiritual when I take a whole hour for my "quiet time."  
Wow! How great I am!"*

Well, devout Jews had special times devoted to prayer.

Prayer was meant to saturate their life—it was not a compartment of life. Prayer was like **breathing**, like **living**, like **being alive**. Life was a prayer, offered up over and over to God **each moment**.

What do you think how many praises a faithful Jew should have offered to God a day? 10? 24? There are 24 hours a day, that would be a good number... 50? That sounds like a nice round number?

According to the rabbinic tradition, devout Jews were supposed to recite each day 100 praises and thanksgivings to God for whom God was and thank Him for His gifts. ONE HUNDRED!

These prasing words were called the "**berakah**," which meant **blessing**. Berakah were prayers of wonder, praise, thanksgiving, and acknowledgement of unmerited divine blessing in every situation. 100 praises of God to sanctify His name, to praise Him.

I believe we are much more inclined to come up with 100 requests...

His name is to be hallowed and we must make the personal decision to do that when we prayer. **No one can hallow His name for you.**

You and I must learn to reverence and respect that holiest of names so that we do not enter disrespectfully into His presence.

Jesus did that constantly:

- *Our Father who art in heaven...Holy is your name... (Luke 11:2)*
- *I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.... (Luke 10:21)*
- *(Before raising Lazarus) "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me ..." (John 11:41-42)*
- *(Just before the cross) "Father the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you." (John 17: 1-2)*

#### **D. US TO BECOME HOLY**

It is a petition for help in **living out His holiness in our daily lives**. Our **very lives** are to hallow his name. A theologian said:

*“The only reason God leaves us here after we are saved is so that we can hallow His name before a lost and dying world. He wants us to live lives that are so clean and so different from those of the world around us that men are drawn to Him for salvation.”*

We should be able to write *over every area of our lives the inscription* “Hallowed be thy name.”

When we cannot write that inscription over an area of our lives, then that area of life must be changed and brought under the subjection of God’s will.

And when that happens than *God’s kingdom starts to be real here, on this earth.*

## 2. His Kingdom and His will

### A. “*THY KINGDOM COME* “

#### Personal dimension:

So when we pray, "*Father, let your kingdom come,*" we should mean, "*Father, rule in my life. Be my king. Get the victory over my anxiety about life's necessities.*" This is the personal dimension of the coming of the kingdom.

#### Worldwide Dimension

But just as important as the personal dimension is the worldwide dimension. Jesus said to his disciples at the Last Supper:

*"From now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."*  
(Luke 22:18)

In other words the coming of the kingdom is *not only a present spiritual experience but also a future historical event.* It refers to the time when the King of Kings, Jesus Christ will come in glory with his angels in flaming fire and gather his elect from the four winds and establish his kingdom on the earth.

So when we pray, "*Thy kingdom come,*" we are asking God to draw history to a close and establish his kingdom on the earth. This future kingdom will be vastly different from any kingdom that has ever existed upon this earth. All earthly kingdoms are tainted by the effects of sin. There is evil at their core: "*Now, all the world lies under the grip of sin.*" (Rom. 8:22)

There is a day coming when Jesus Himself will rule this world, where His WILL be DONE.

**B. “*THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN*”****Personal dimension:**

When I pray “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven,” I am praying, “*Lord, help me to carry out Your will in this world, cheerfully, completely and constantly, just like it is being done in Heaven.*”

This is the attitude that God wants to develop in your heart and in mine.

This is the personal level and it means: “*Father, please cause me to obey your will the way the angels obey it in heaven. Make my obedience a heavenly obedience.*”

**The Worldwide Dimension**

On the worldwide level the meaning is far greater. In heaven there is nothing but obedience to the will of God.

So when we pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we are praying that the earth would be filled only with people who do the will of God. What is the will of God.

The will of God is that everyone would hear about Jesus, about his loving grace, about the fact that He is ABBA, “DADDY” and that he restored the broken relationship with him. We are forgiven. That is the will of God, that every one , everywhere in the world would hear this.

Ralph Winter talks about 17,000 people groups in the world that are unreached. These are groups distinct enough in culture that they cannot be reached by near neighbor evangelism, and have to be reached by cross cultural missionaries.

The World Christian Encyclopedia of 1980. It says there are 432 major ethnolinguistic groups in the world. Of these 81 (19%) have populations in which fewer than 1% claim any association with Christianity at all. These 81 groups make up 1.7 billion people—about a third of the world's population.

Of these 81 groups, 43 are listed in the encyclopedia with 0.00% Christians. They speak 220 languages, only 54 of which have any written Scriptures. So even if you view the world in terms of 432 large ethnolinguistic groups instead of 20,000 people groups, the commission of our Lord and ***the purpose of his prayer are not yet finished.***

If we aim to be ***obedient to the Lord***, we must seek to let his prayer be answered in our own lives.

We must hallow his name more deeply. We must believe and fear and obey and glorify his name with new intensity. We must be willing ourselves to go wherever he may lead us. We must simplify our lives to free time and everything that that we are called into for “hallowing HIS NAME.”

Amen